

REMARKS

Claims 1, 14-15 and 21-38 have been cancelled. Claims 2-6 and 9-12 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced. Seventeen (17) claims are pending and remain for consideration. Favorable reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

IN THE CLAIMS

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge the allowance of claims 16-20. Applicants also acknowledge that claims 9-11 have been indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 9-11 have been so amended. In addition, claims 2, 6 and 12 have been amended to depend from claim 10, and should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10. Claims 3-5, 7, 8 and 13 depend directly or indirectly from claims 2, 6 and 12 and likewise should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10.

35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 1-3, 6-7 and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,033,000, to Littlejohn et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,807,465, to Ulrich et al. Claim 1 has been cancelled. Claims 2, 3, 6-7 and 12-13 depend from claim 10, which should be in condition for allowance. Claims 2, 3, 6-7 and 12-13 should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10.

Claims 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,819,981, to Wakefield, II et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,345,226, to Rice, Jr. et al. Claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled.

Claims 4-5 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Littlejohn in view of Ulrich and Rice, Jr. et al. Claims 4-5 and 8 depend from claim 10 and should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10.

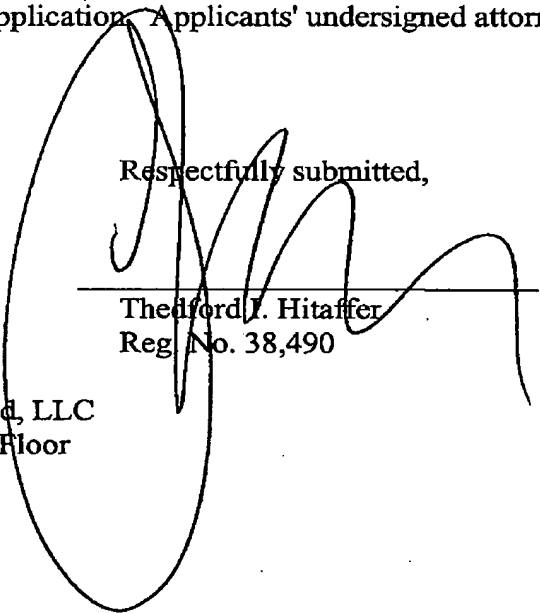
Claims 21-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ulrich, Wakefield, II et al. (US 6,819,981), and further U.S. Patent No. 5,961,561, also to Wakefield, II et al. Claims 21-38 have been cancelled.

In view of the amendments and above remarks, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Request for Telephone Interview

As a final matter, if the Examiner does not find the application in condition for allowance, prior to issuance of another Office Action, Applicants' undersigned attorney requests the courtesy of a telephone interview at the Examiner's earliest convenience to discuss the application. Applicants' undersigned attorney may be contacted at (419) 255-5900.

Respectfully submitted,


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